

DHSS Seeks School Supplies, Gift Cards to Support Adopt-A-Student Program's Goal of Helping Students in Need

NEW CASTLE (July 25, 2018) – With back-to-school shopping already well underway for many Delaware families, the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) asks you to consider helping students in need get off to a good start this school year by participating in the annual Adopt-A-Student program.

DHSS, in partnership with the Human Services Council, Inc., is seeking individuals, businesses and organizations to help thousands of the state's children living in poverty or in low-income households by providing much needed backpacks, school supplies, and gift cards to purchase uniforms. The deadline for donations is Aug. 3.

"Providing resources and support for low-income students has always been high on my list of priorities," said Governor John Carney. "The work done by the Adopt-A-Student program – thanks to the generosity of sponsors and donors – helps make sure all Delaware children are ready to start learning with the first school bell of the year. I urge Delawareans to donate to Adopt-A-Student so our most vulnerable students are ready to take that next step toward success."

Designed to encourage a positive attitude toward school by helping with the supplies students need to achieve success, Adopt-A-Student accepts backpacks and school supply donations, as well as \$50 gift cards to retail stores that carry school uniforms such as Forman Mills, Rainbow and Walmart.

"This year we shared the poem 'Children Learn What They Live,'

written by Ms. Dorothy Law Nolte many years ago, with our sponsors – a poem that has been an inspiration to many over the years,” said Lisa MB Johnson, Program Administrator for the Adopt-A-Family program in the Division of State Service Centers. “Our goal is to decrease the stress level of vulnerable families as parents and children prepare for a successful school year.

“We are excited about the support we have received from the Delaware community at-large and want to reiterate the point that our sponsors continue to be an inspiration to the many children and parents whose lives they encourage by the annual educational support they provide.”

In 2015, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 12 percent of Delawareans lived below the poverty line.

To “adopt” a student or make a donation, please contact the closest Adopt-A-Family office:

- New Castle County: Contact the Adopt-A-Student program at 302-792-6510 or email sharon.brown@delaware.gov. Donation hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Kent and Sussex counties: Contact the Adopt-A-Student program at 302-424-7260 or email elizabeth.senato@delaware.gov. Donation hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Any donor who needs to drop off donations outside of these hours may call either office for an accommodation. More information can be found at www.adoptafamilyde.org.

In 2017, the Adopt-A-Student program, through the leadership of the Human Services Councils, Inc., helped more than 1,400 Delaware students. Year-round, the various Adopt-A-Family programs aid families in crisis – those struggling with illness, homelessness, domestic violence, poverty or unemployment. The program, begun in 1973, is coordinated by

the Division of State Service Centers in all three counties.

For these programs, Adopt-A-Family accepts financial and in-kind donations. All donations are tax deductible (Federal Tax ID# 51-0292966). Checks can be made payable to: Adopt-A-Family, and mailed to either 3301 Green St., Claymont, DE 19703; or 13 SW Front St., Milford, DE 19963.

For more information about Adopt-A-Family, go to www.adoptafamilyde.org/ or contact your nearest state service center.